

Top 5 Skills

Communication Skills (listening, verbal, written)

By far, the one skill mentioned most often by employers is the ability to listen, write, and speak effectively. This means the ability to listen, express oneself fluently and intelligently, and to use proper spelling and grammar to express ideas effectively.

Analytical/Research Skills

Deals with your ability to assess a situation, seek multiple perspectives, gather more information if necessary, and identify key issues that need to be addressed.

Computer/Technical Literacy

Almost all jobs now require some basic understanding of computer hardware and software, especially word processing, spreadsheets, and email.

Leadership and Management Skills

These skills deal with your ability to take charge and manage your co-workers. Employers want goal-driven leaders who will maintain a productive climate and confidently motivate, mobilize, and coach employees to meet high performance standards.

Problem-Solving, Reasoning, and Creativity

Involves the ability to find solutions to problems using your creativity, reasoning, and past experiences along with the available information and resources.

Top 5 Work Values

Strong Work Ethic

Employers value employees who understand and possess a willingness to work hard. In addition to working hard it is also important to work smart. This means learning the most efficient way to complete tasks and finding ways to save time while completing daily assignments.

Dependable and Responsible

Employers value employees who come to work on time, are there when they are suppose to be, and are responsible for their actions and behavior.

Possessing a Positive Attitude

Employers want employees who take the initiative and have the motivation to get the job done in a reasonable period of time. A positive attitude gets the work done and motivates others to do the same without dwelling on the challenges that inevitably come up in any job.

Adaptability

Employers want employees who are adaptable and maintain flexibility in completing tasks in an ever-changing workplace. Being open to change and improvements provides an opportunity to complete work assignments in a more efficient manner while offering additional benefits to the corporation, the customer, and even the employee.

Honesty and Integrity

Employers value employees who maintain a sense of honesty and integrity above all else. Good relationships are built on trust.

We often hear the advice to “*stay in school!*” Today—that advice is more important than ever.

More education equals more pay and less chance of unemployment.

- ⦿ Earnings go up with every year of school completed and get an extra boost when a degree program is completed.
- ⦿ Education pays off because better-educated workers learn tasks more easily and are usually more organized.
- ⦿ Remember that the differences in earnings can occur within academic disciplines and that the occupation you choose will make a definite difference in your earning capacity.

Education Attainment	Weekly Median Earnings 2008 (U.S.)	Unemployment Rate 2008 (U.S.)
Less than a high school diploma	\$426	9.0%
High school graduate	\$591	5.7%
Some college*, no degree	\$645	5.1%
Associate degree	\$736	3.7%
Bachelor’s degree	\$978	2.8%
Master’s degree	\$1,228	2.4%
Professional degree	\$1,522	1.7%
Doctorate degree	\$1,555	2.0%

*Including vocational/technical

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics/Current Population Survey.

Eight Keys to Employability

◆ Personal Values

Valued workers:

- ◇ Are honest and motivated
- ◇ Exhibit a good attitude
- ◇ Have personal and career goals
- ◇ Have a positive self-image

◆ Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

Valued workers:

- ◇ Adapt to change
- ◇ Are flexible
- ◇ Are creative and innovative
- ◇ Can reason and make objective judgements
- ◇ Plan and organize work

◆ Relations With Others

Valued workers:

- ◇ Accept authority and supervision
- ◇ Are team players
- ◇ Are friendly, cooperative, and tactful
- ◇ Have leadership qualities
- ◇ Respect the rights and property of others
- ◇ Respect constructive criticism
- ◇ Respect diversity

◆ Communication

Valued workers:

- ◇ Ask questions and listen well
- ◇ Express themselves clearly
- ◇ Notify supervisor of absences
- ◇ Seek help when needed

◆ Task-Related Attributes

Valued workers:

- ◇ Care for tools and materials
- ◇ Complete work on time
- ◇ Follow directions
- ◇ Stick with a task
- ◇ Work neatly and accurately
- ◇ Work to improve their performance

◆ Maturity

Valued workers:

- ◇ Are assertive when necessary
- ◇ Are reliable and dependable
- ◇ Accept responsibility
- ◇ Are willing to perform extra work and work overtime
- ◇ Have confidence in themselves
- ◇ Show initiative
- ◇ Show pride in their work
- ◇ Work well without supervision

◆ Health and Safety Habits

Valued workers:

- ◇ Dress appropriately for job/task
- ◇ Practice good personal hygiene
- ◇ Observe safety rules
- ◇ Take an interest in good health habits

◆ Commitment to a Job

Valued workers:

- ◇ Are enthusiastic
- ◇ Are punctual and have good attendance
- ◇ Exhibit loyalty to the company
- ◇ Give their best efforts
- ◇ Show concern for their future
- ◇ Want to learn more

Sample Job Application

Employers use job applications to screen for qualified persons to interview for their job openings. If a job application does not make a favorable impression, the applicant may never even get an interview with an employer. Here are some tips as well as a sample application.

◎ **Make your application neat and complete.**

- ◇ Filling an application out online is the most desirable method for a legible and professional look. Many public libraries and community centers provide access to a computer if you do not own one.
- ◇ If the application is not available online, print as neatly as possible using black or dark blue ink.

◎ **Complete all spaces and be accurate.**

- ◇ Be sure to have the correct addresses (including zip codes) and phone numbers of your former places of employment as well as the name and titles of your former supervisors.
- ◇ Write "N/A" for not applicable if you do not think a question applies to you.
- ◇ Even though space on applications can be limited, avoid all but the most common abbreviations so a potential employer will understand them.

◎ **Choose your references wisely.**

- ◇ Choose former co-workers, teachers, and mentors for references. Limit the number of friends you use.
- ◇ Be sure to notify the people you are listing as your references, and let them know they might be called by the potential employer.
- ◇ Choose people who will speak positively about you.

◎ **Spell correctly and use proper English.**

- ◇ Writing skills are valued by employers.
- ◇ Misspellings and grammatically incorrect sentences give a poor impression of your abilities.
- ◇ Use action verbs, such as: achieved, assisted, earned, focused, etc., to describe your experiences.

On the next page is a sample application for you to complete. You can take the completed sample to use as a reference when you fill out an actual application.

Sample Job Application

Name _____ Social Security Number _____
Street Address _____ Telephone _____
City/County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
E-mail Address _____
Valid Driver's License: Yes No State _____ License ID Number _____

Education

Highest grade completed _____ Did you graduate? Yes No Year _____
Name of High School _____
Street Address _____
City/County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Name of College/University/Vocational School/Other _____
Street Address _____
City/County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Years Attended _____ Did you graduate? Yes No Year _____
Degree/Certificate Received _____

Employment Experience

1. Job Title _____ Duties _____
Employer _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Employer/Supervisor's Name _____
Salary (start) _____ Salary (finish) _____ Dates: From _____ To _____
Reason for leaving _____
2. Job Title _____ Duties _____
Employer _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Employer/Supervisor's Name _____
Salary (start) _____ Salary (finish) _____ Dates: From _____ To _____
Reason for leaving _____

References

Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____
Street Address _____
City/County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____
Street Address _____
City/County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Tomorrow's Jobs

Fastest-growing occupations and occupations projected to have the largest numerical increases in employment between 2006 and 2016, by level of postsecondary education or training.

Degree/Training	Fastest-Growing Occupations	Occupations with Largest Numerical Job Growth
First-professional	Veterinarians	Physicians & surgeons
	Pharmacists	Lawyers
	Chiropractors	Pharmacists
	Physicians & surgeons	Veterinarians
	Optometrists	Dentists
Doctoral	Postsecondary teachers	Postsecondary teachers
	Computer & Information scientists, research	Clinical, counseling, & school psychologists
	Medical scientists, except epidemiologists	Medical scientists, except epidemiologists
	Biochemists & biophysicists	Computer & Information scientists, research
	Clinical, counseling, and school psychologists	Biochemists & biophysicists
Master's	Mental health counselors	Clergy
	Mental health & substance abuse social workers	Physical therapists
	Marriage & family counselors	Mental health & substance abuse social workers
	Physical therapists	Education, vocational, & school counselors
	Physician assistants	Rehabilitation counselors
Bachelor's or higher, plus work experience	Actuaries	Management analysts
	Education administrators, preschool & child care center/program	Financial managers
	Management analysts	Computer & information systems managers
	Training & development specialists	Medical & health services managers
	Public relations managers	Training & development specialists
Bachelor's	Network systems & data communications analysts	Computer software engineers, applications
	Computer software engineers, applications	Accountants & auditors
	Personal finance advisors	Business operations specialists, all other
	Substance abuse & behavioral disorder counselors	Elementary school teachers, except special education
	Financial analysts	Computer systems analysts
Associate	Veterinary technologists & technicians	Registered nurses
	Physical therapist assistants	Computer support specialists
	Dental hygienists	Paralegals & legal assistants
	Environmental science & protection technicians, including health	Dental hygienists
	Cardiovascular technologists & Technicians	Legal secretaries
Postsecondary vocational award	Makeup artists, theatrical & performance	Nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants
	Skin care specialists	Preschool teachers, except special education
	Manicurists & pedicurists	Automotive service technicians & mechanics
	Fitness trainers & aerobics instructors	Licensed practical & licensed vocational nurses
	Preschool teachers, except special education	Hairdressers, hairstylists, & cosmetologists
Work experience in a related occupation	Sales representatives, services, all other	Executive secretaries & administrative assistants
	Gaming managers	Sales representatives, services, all other
	Gaming supervisors	Sales representatives, wholesale & manufacturing, except technical & scientific products
	Aircraft cargo handling supervisors	First-line supervisors/managers of food preparation & serving workers
	Self-enrichment education teachers	First-line supervisors/managers of office & administrative support workers
Short-term on-the-job training	Personal & home care aides	Retail salesperson
	Home health aides	Combined food prep & serving workers, incl. fast food
	Gaming & sports book writers & runners	Office clerk, general
	Physical therapist aides	Personal and home care aides
	Amusement & recreational attendants	Home health aides